

FIRE SAFETY & EVACUATION PLANNING FOR NURSING HOMES & ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

April 2012, Updated September 2013

COLORADO SPRINGS FIRE DEPARTMENT **Division of the Fire Marshal**



If you have any questions or comments regarding the information contained within, or if you need assistance interpreting these requirements, please contact:

Colorado Springs Fire Department
Division of the Fire Marshal
375 Printers Parkway
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910
Tel: (719) 385-5978
Fax: (719) 385-7334

Table of Contents

Scope	3
Purpose	3
Definitions	3
Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan Requirements and Submittals	3
Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan Contents.....	4
Special Training Requirements for Assisted Living Facilities	5
Special Evacuation Requirements for Nursing Homes.....	6
Plan Availability and Distribution	6
Plan Maintenance	6
Fire Department Notification and Plan Implementation.....	6
Employee and Staff Plan Training.....	7
Evacuation/Fire Drills	7
Hazard Communication	8
Evacuation Map/Diagram Posting	9

Scope

This document is intended for all Group I-1 (Assisted Living Facilities) and I-2 (Nursing Homes) as defined by the 2009 International Fire Code as amended. This document is also applicable to any facility that may be classified as something other than a Group I-1 or I-2 that performs the functions of Assisted Living Facilities and/or Nursing Homes. Group I-4 occupancies (day care facilities both adult and child) are not part of the scope of this document.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide applicable facilities with guidance in preparing a fire safety and evacuation plan. For questions regarding anything not covered within this document, please contact the Division of the Fire Marshal (DFM).

Definitions¹

Group I-1 Occupancy This occupancy includes buildings, structures or parts thereof housing more than 16 persons, on a 24-hour basis, who because of age, mental disability or other reasons, live in a supervised residential environment that provides personal care services. The occupants are capable of responding to an emergency situation without physical assistance from staff. This group includes but not limited to:

- Alcohol and drug centers
- Assisted living facilities
- Congregate care facilities
- Convalescent facilities
- Group homes
- Half-way houses
- Residential board and care facilities
- Social rehabilitation facilities

Group I-2 Occupancy This occupancy shall include buildings and structures used for medical, surgical, psychiatric, nursing or custodial care for persons who are not capable of self preservation. This group includes but not limited to:

- Child care facilities
- Detoxification facilities
- Hospitals
- Mental hospitals
- Nursing homes

Emergency Evacuation Drill An exercise performed to train staff and occupants and to evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out emergency evacuation procedures.

Lockdown An emergency situation requiring that the occupants be sheltered and secured in place within a building when normal evacuation would put occupants at risk.

Special Needs Occupant A patron, employee, student, resident, or tenant that has unique or unusual need regarding their mobility capacity. These special needs can include, but are not limited to, the physically disabled, hearing impaired, visually impaired, or mentally impaired.

Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan Requirements and Submittals

Per Section 404.2 of the 2009 Colorado Springs Fire Code, a fire safety and evacuation plan is required in all I-occupancies to include assisted living facilities and nursing homes. Such plans must initially be submitted to the Division of the Fire Marshal for review and approval.

Submit at least one plan, described in the following sections, to the Division of the Fire Marshal of the Colorado Springs Fire Department. The plans may be dropped off in person, faxed or submitted electronically through email via the contacts shown below:

¹ Based on the 2009 International Fire Code as amended.

Colorado Springs Fire Department
Division of the Fire Marshal
375 Printers Parkway
Colorado Springs, CO 80910
Fax: 719-385-7334
Email: fireevacplan@springsgov.com
Hours: M-F 7:30am to 4:00pm

There is no charge for the review/approval of the fire safety and evacuation plans. Once the plans have been approved, a copy of the cover sheet showing the approval stamp and date will be sent back to the individual submitting the plans. If a hardcopy of the stamped/approved plans is desired, additional plans must be originally submitted. The Division of the Fire Marshal will retain one copy on file and the remaining copies will be returned.

To check the status of submitted plans, visit the following link <http://www.springsgov.com/Page.aspx?NavID=1096>. From this link the Log Status and Review Status may be checked. Log Status indicates all plans logged in for review and are sorted by street name. Review States indicates the status (approved/disapproved/etc.) of reviewed plans. Please contact the Division of the Fire Marshal with any questions.

Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan Contents

The fire safety and evacuation plan is comprised of four (4) sections:

1. Cover page
2. Written plan
3. Floor plan(s) with evacuation routes shown
4. Site plan

Cover Page²

The Cover Page must include the following information:

1. Name of business/facility.
2. Name, address, telephone numbers and email (if applicable) of the manager(s) of the tenant.
3. Name, address, telephone numbers and email (if applicable) of the building owner (if different than tenant).
4. Main occupancy classification of building.
5. Total square footage of occupancy (all floors, levels, mezzanines, etc) and number of occupied floors above- and below-grade.
6. Identification and assignment of personnel who can be contacted for further information or explanation of duties under the plan.
7. Emergency contact information for key operational personnel and building owner's agent.

Written Plan³

The written portion of the fire safety and evacuation plan includes information regarding reporting fires/emergencies and occupant notification; evacuation and accountability of the evacuees; emergency response and crowd managements; and occupancy hazards. Each sub section has specific information that is required by code to be included in the plan.

Note that all bulleted items below are required by the fire code to be included within the fire safety and evacuation plan.

Fire/Emergency Reporting and Occupant Notification

- The preferred and any alternative means of reporting fires and other emergencies to the fire department or designated emergency response organization.
- The preferred and any alternative means of notifying occupants of a fire or emergency.
- A description of the emergency voice/alarm communication system alert tone and preprogrammed voice messages, where provided. The procedure for reporting a fire or other emergency.

Evacuation and Accountability

- Emergency egress or escape routes and whether evacuation of the building is to be complete or, where approved, by selected floors or areas only.

² A Cover Sheet template is available for download at: <http://www.springsgov.com/SIB/files/Cover%20Sheet.pdf>

³ A Written Plan template is available for download at: [http://www.springsgov.com/SIB/files/Written%20Plan\(1\).pdf](http://www.springsgov.com/SIB/files/Written%20Plan(1).pdf)

- The life safety strategy and procedures for notifying, relocating or evacuating occupants, including occupants who need assistance.
- Procedures for accounting for employees and occupants after evacuation has been completed.

Emergency Response and Crowd Management

- Procedures for employees who must remain to operate critical equipment before evacuating.
- Procedures for assisted rescue for persons unable to use the general means of egress unassisted.
- Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for rescue or emergency medical aid.
- Special staff actions including fire protection procedures necessary for residents and shall be amended or revised upon admission of any resident with special needs.⁴

Occupancy Hazards

- A list of major fire hazards associated with the normal use and occupancy of the premises, including maintenance and housekeeping procedures.
- Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for maintenance, housekeeping and controlling fuel hazard sources.
- Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for maintenance of systems and equipment installed to prevent or control fires.

Floor Plans⁵

The floor plan portion of the fire safety and evacuation plan must identify the locations of the following:

- Locations of all exits, exit stairs and exit corridors.
- Primary evacuation routes from all spaces (delineate primary routes in a different manner than secondary routes)
- Secondary evacuation routes from all space (delineate secondary routes in a different manner than primary routes)
- Identify accessible egress routes and all areas of refuge⁶
- Exterior areas for assisted rescue
- Locations of manual fire alarm boxes (pull stations)
- Locations of portable fire extinguishers
- Location of hose valve/standpipe stations
- Location of all fire alarm annunciators and controls

Site Plans⁷

The last portion or site plan portion of the plan must indicate the following:

- Building footprint showing all exits and the evacuee assembly point (multiple points permitted if facility is large)
- The locations of fire hydrants
- The normal routes of fire department vehicle access (fire lanes)

Assisted Living Facility Special Training Requirements

The required fire safety and evacuation plans must include special staff actions including fire protection procedures necessary for residents and shall be amended or revised upon admission of any resident with special needs.

Staff Training

Employees shall be periodically instructed and kept informed of their duties and responsibilities under the plan. Employees are to be specifically trained in the emergency procedures for any special needs occupants. All such instruction shall be reviewed by staff at least every two months and upon arrival of a resident with special needs.

Resident Training

Residents capable of assisting in their own evacuation shall be trained in the proper actions to take in the event of a fire. The training shall include actions to take if the primary escape route is blocked. Where the resident is given rehabilitation or habilitation training, training in fire prevention and actions to take in the event of a fire shall be a part

⁴ For assisted living facilities.

⁵ A Floor Plan template is available for download at: http://www.springsgov.com/SIB/files/Floor_Plan_Template.pdf

⁶ Accessible routes and areas of refuge apply to persons with physical disabilities

⁷ A Site Plan template is available for download at: http://www.springsgov.com/SIB/files/Site_Plan_Template.pdf

of the rehabilitation training program. Residents shall be trained to assist each other in case of fire to the extent their physical and mental abilities permit them to do so without additional personal risk.

Drill Frequency

Emergency evacuation drills shall be conducted at least six times per year, two times per year on each shift. Twelve drills shall be conducted in the first year of operation. Drills are not required to be held at unexpected times or under varying conditions.

Resident Participation

Emergency evacuation drills shall involve the actual evacuation of residents to a selected assembly point.

Nursing Home Special Evacuation Requirements

Evacuation Not Required

During emergency evacuation drills, the movement of patients to safe areas or to the exterior of the building is not required.

Coded Alarm Signals

When emergency evacuation drills are conducted after visiting hours or when patients or residents are expected to be asleep, a coded announcement is allowed instead of audible alarms.

Drills

Drills are not required to be held at unexpected times or under varying conditions.

Plan Availability and Distribution

Fire safety and evacuation plans must be made available in the workplace at the front office/desk or near the fire alarm control panel. The plans must be available for reference and review by facility employees and copies shall be furnished to the Fire Marshal upon request. The plans are to be kept in a notebook and/or in protective coverings.

The plan must be distributed to the tenants and building service employees by the owner or owner's agent. Tenants shall distribute to their employees applicable parts of the fire safety plan affecting the employees' actions in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Plan Maintenance

Fire safety and evacuation plans must initially be approved by the Division of the Fire Marshal. The plans must be reviewed and updated by the facility annually or as necessitated by changes in staff assignments, occupancy or the physical arrangement of the building. Plans need to be resubmitted to the Division of the Fire Marshal only when *significant* changes to the plans have occurred.

Fire safety and evacuation plans shall be reviewed or updated by the facility annually or as necessitated by changes in staff assignments, occupancy or the physical arrangement of the building. The Division of the Fire Marshal does not need to re-review plans where changes in personnel/staff assignments, contact information or similar.

Fire Department Notification and Plan Implementation

According to Section 401.3 of the 2009 Colorado Springs Fire Code, notification of the fire department must occur when the following occurs:

- In the event an unwanted fire occurs on a property, the owner or occupant shall immediately report such condition to the fire department
- Upon activation of a fire alarm signal, employees or staff shall immediately notify the fire department

A person shall not, by verbal or written directive, require any delay in the reporting of a fire to the fire department.

In the event an unwanted fire is detected in a building or fire alarm activates, the fire safety and evacuation plan shall be implemented.

Employee and Staff Plan Training

Employees shall be trained in the fire emergency procedures described in the fire safety and evacuation plan. All training shall be based on the plan contents.

Employees shall receive training in the contents of the fire safety and evacuation plans and their duties as part of new employee orientation and at least annually thereafter. Records shall be kept and made available to the Fire Marshal upon request.

Fire Prevention Training

Employees shall be apprised of the fire hazards of the materials and processes to which they are exposed. Each employee shall be instructed on the proper procedures for preventing fires in the conduct of their assigned duties.

Evacuation Training

Employees shall be familiarized with the fire alarm and evacuation signals, their assigned duties in the event of an alarm or emergency, evacuation routes, areas of refuge, exterior assembly areas and procedures for evacuation.

Emergency Lockdown Training

Where a facility has a lockdown plan, employees shall be trained on their assigned duties and procedures in the event of an emergency lockdown.

Fire Safety Training

Employees assigned fire-fighting duties shall be trained to know the locations and proper use of portable fire extinguishers or other manual fire-fighting equipment and the protective clothing or equipment required for its safe and proper use.

Evacuation/Fire Drills⁸

Evacuation/fire drills shall be conducted at least quarterly on each shift per the table below.

GROUP OR OCCUPANCY	FREQUENCY	PARTICIPATION
Group A	Quarterly	Employees
Group B	Annually	All Occupants
Group E	Monthly ^a	All Occupants
Group F and H	Semi-annually on each shift	Employees
Group I	Quarterly on each shift	Employees ^b
Group R-4	Quarterly on each shift	Employees ^b
Group S	Semi-annually on each shift	Employees

a. The frequency shall be allowed to be modified by the Fire Marshal in severe climates.

b. Fire and evacuation drills in residential care assisted living facilities shall include complete evacuation of the premises to a selected assembly point and shall provide residents with experience in existing through all required exits (actual exiting from windows not required but opening window and signaling for help is acceptable).

Frequency

Required emergency evacuation drills shall be held at intervals specified in the table above or more frequently where necessary to familiarize all occupants with the drill procedure.

Leadership

Responsibility for the planning and conduct of drills shall be assigned to competent persons designated to exercise leadership.

Time

Drills shall be held at unexpected time and under varying conditions to simulate the unusual conditions that occur in case of fire.

⁸ Most assisted living facilities and nursing homes are considered a Group I occupancy.

Record Keeping⁹

Records shall be maintained of required emergency evacuation drills and include the following information:

- Identity of the person conducting the drill
- Date and time of drill
- Notification method used
- Staff members on duty and participating
- Number of occupants evacuated
- Special conditions simulated
- Problems encountered
- Weather condition when occupants were evacuated
- Time required to accomplish complete evacuation

Notification

It is not required that the facility notify the fire department prior to an evacuation drill. However if a fire alarm or any device connected to the fire alarm is used to initiate the drill, notification to the fire alarm monitoring company must be made prior to the drill. The fire alarm monitoring company must be notified of the drill along with the drill duration. This is to prevent the monitoring company from contacting the fire department of a fire alarm. Once the drill is complete, the fire alarm monitoring company must be contacted and informed that the drill is over and normal monitoring is to resume.

Initiation

Where a fire alarm system is provided, emergency evacuation drill shall be initiated by activating the fire alarm system.

Accountability

As building occupants arrive at the assembly point, efforts shall be made to determine if all occupants have been successfully evacuated or have been accounted for.

Recall and Reentry

An electronically or mechanically operated signal used to recall occupants after an evacuation shall be separate and distinct from the signal used to initiate the evacuation. The recall signal initiation means shall be manually operated and under the control of the person in charge of the premises or the official in charge of the incident. No one shall reenter the premises until authorized to do so by the official in charge.

Hazard Communication

This section only applies to those I-1 and I-2 occupancies that have an annual hazardous materials permit. To check to see if a facility also has an annual hazardous materials permit, please contact the Division of the Fire Marshal.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

Material safety data sheets for all hazardous materials shall be either readily available on the premises as a paper copy; or where approved, shall be permitted to be readily retrievable by electronic access. Approved electronic access shall be as follows:

- Media shall be USB flash drive
- Format shall be Microsoft Word 2000 or newer document, PDF or other approved format

Where a Knox Box is located at a facility, one USB device shall be stored in the Knox Box and one device shall be located in an approved location. All devices and contents shall be maintained.

Identification

Individual containers of hazardous materials, cartons or packages shall be marked or labeled in accordance with applicable federal regulations. Buildings, rooms and spaces containing hazardous materials shall be identified by hazard warning signs in accordance with Section 2703.5 of the Colorado Springs Fire Code.

Training

Persons responsible for the operation of areas, in which hazardous materials are stored, dispensed, handled or used, shall

⁹ An evacuation drill checklist is available for download at
http://www.springsgov.com/units/fire/safety/FIRE_DRILL_EVALUATION_CHECKLIST.pdf

be familiar with the chemical nature of the materials and the appropriate mitigating actions necessary in the event of a fire, leak or spill. Responsible persons shall be designated and trained to be liaison personnel for the fire department. These persons shall aid the fire department in preplanning emergency responses and identification of the locations where hazardous materials are located, and shall have access to Material Safety Data Sheets and be knowledgeable in the site emergency response procedures.

Evacuation Map/Diagram Posting

Although the fire code does not require the evacuation map to be posted for such facilities/occupancies, the Division of the Fire Marshal provides some guidance in terms of where the maps should be posted.

- The evacuation diagrams posted within a facility should include a location for “You Are Here” that is unique for each location of the diagram.
- Ensure the diagram is displayed/oriented/turned in such a way that quickly allows the viewer to determine which direction to exit. In other words, if the viewer faces the map and lays it flat, the elements seen left of the viewer within the facility will actually be shown to the left of the “You Are Here” on the diagram. An example of this would be if the viewer is holding the diagram in front of them and the diagram shows an exit immediately to the right of the viewer, the viewer should be able to turn their head to the right and see the exit.
- Post diagrams in prominently traveled areas (e.g., hallways, stairwells, dorm rooms, drinking fountains etc.). Unusual building layouts require more evacuation maps to be posted.